

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

9 December 1971

FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of
RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICERS

Dec 2-3, 1971

FINDINGS OF PANEL G

25X1A Members of Panel G (Those who actually participated in
Panel discussions at RC.)

25X1A [REDACTED] Chairman
[REDACTED] Alternate Chairman

25X1A

I commenced my oral presentation with a statement that our panel agreed with many of the recommendations made by the other panels and that I would devote my comments to those of our findings which had not already been covered. Specifically, the stated recommendations to which I referred were:

Volume Growth Control

Review and refine existing Records Control Schedules.

Standardize holding time. Where appropriate:

Keep at Headquarters longer

Destroy more at Headquarters (don't send to RC)

Shorten retention period at RC.

Better control of Supplemental Distribution material. Check supplies periodically to determine rate of activity with a view to keeping a lower more realistic supply.

Microfilming where appropriate.

Records Retention Plan

Starting point for preparing Records Retention Plan is to inventory records
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We acknowledged in our discussions that the above were the obvious and what we had been exposed to over and over again. We then turned our attention to coming up with ideas over and above these and were successful, we think, in being able to present the following.

1. In connection with the Volume Growth Control formula worked out for the Records Center, we noted that in his introductory remarks, [REDACTED] stated that the decision had been made that any office not using its authorized quota for a particular year would not lose that space. It would go into an escrow account to the office's credit to be used when needed. It was the recommendation of our panel that this decision be written up as procedure and that a determination be made, and included in the procedure, as to who would keep the escrow accounts, or score sheets if you prefer.

2. We singled out Vital Records for further discussion. We feel that Vital Records are necessary and important; that RMOs should review and update the Vital Record Schedules periodically; and that records no longer necessary should be destroyed. However, at this time the only justification for these records is as security preservation of important papers. We can't say that they are in support of an active Emergency Planning Program. It is necessary that the executive levels of the Agency review and update their Emergency missions and functions and then the RMOs can do a more realistic job of giving support. We do recognize the lack of guidance from the White House or from the Office of Emergency Planning complicates matters and that the RMOs should do their best to keep the vital records program alive. This we will do but we have to recognize that an important element, beyond our control, is missing.

3. A new idea, to most of us, surfaced in the discussion on microfilming. One office, which has an active microfilming program, has discovered that when material is removed from safes and microfilmed the empty safes don't go away -- they seemed to get filled up again with other material. Should some thought be given to tying equipment turn-in to a microfilm project approval?

4. A very good control device is the new equipment requisition procedure. We have already witnessed its effectiveness in our offices.

5. How about a closer look at records inventories vs equipment inventories? It has been observed in some offices that, on occasion, when the inventory of records on hand has gone down the inventory of safes has shown an increase. What causes the discrepancy? Human error? New functions? Something else?

6. More use of "sampling" in retention of permanent records as a volume growth control.

Records Retention Plan

1. Combine Records Control Schedule and Records Retention Plan, using the Records Retention Plan format and adding a column for disposition.

(In the Intelligence Directorate each component has its own Records Control Schedule and each component is working up its own Records Retention Plan. Whatever is done at the Directorate level (most likely a consolidation) will be in addition to and not in place of the individual office products.)

2. No further guidance on preparing the Records Retention Plan will be forthcoming. We must sit down right now and do it ourselves. Once we have something on paper perhaps then further guidance will be available.

3. Offices having Records Control Schedules are that much ahead of the game. However, we did not feel that a General Records Control Schedule would be too much help. Even with a comprehensive schedule we felt that people needed further guidance and so suggested the use of existing file lists or file plans which most offices use in their day-to-day operations. These files may most appropriately be considered as records series and can be related to the items in the Records Control Schedules classified as permanent.

General Comments

Suggested a Management Staff at the Executive Director level having clear-cut records management responsibility and capable of producing policy, guidance


and procedures. Each Directorate Records Management Officer should report directly to that level without having to go through the Directorate Deputy Director level. The Directorate RMO should be evaluated performance-wise by the Executive Management Staff and his fitness report prepared at that level.

We felt there is a definite problem with communications -- or lack of communication, if you will. One specific example of this was evident at the Conference. One panel expressed the opinion that the need for a retention plan be presented as an official requirement and not merely as something nice to have. Our panel was under the impression that such an official requirement had been levied by Col. White.

Lastly (and I forgot to mention this in my oral presentation), there is the human element and unfortunately we RMOs are involved with it at every level -- clerical to executive. Because of this we can never fulfill our mission perfectly but with the proper background, training, guidance and dedication we can come close to it.

I believe that I have accurately presented the consensus of our panel. Although we did not have complete agreement on all matters we did have understanding. I was most fortunate to have had a good panel. All were knowledgeable people who actively participated and maintained an open and flexible attitude in the discussion of ideas presented for consideration.

25X1A


Chairman, Panel G